

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing of claims, in the Application.

Listing of claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of aggregating N Transport Control Protocol-offloaded (TCP-offloaded) TCP-offloaded adapters of a first communications system for transacting to augment network data transaction bandwidth of the first communications system by a factor of N between communications systems, N being an integer, the method comprising the steps of:

aggregating the N TCP-offloaded adapters by assigning a common Internet Protocol (IP) address to the N TCP-offloaded adapters;

selecting one of the N aggregated TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the first and a second communications systems is to originate;

originating the connection using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter, the connection for transacting data over a network between the first and the second communications systems; and

transacting data from the connection through a computing device, the computing device to assemble data from the N TCP-offloaded adapters to the network and for channeling data associated with the connection from the network to the selected TCP-offloaded adapter using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter.

2. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein ~~the selecting step~~ selecting one of the N aggregated TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the first and the second communications systems is to originate is based on a local port and a remote port, the local port and the remote port being the ports through which the data transaction is to occur.
3. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 2 wherein ~~the selecting step~~ selecting one of the N aggregated TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the first and the second communications systems is to originate includes the step of assigning a local port through which the connection is to occur if a local port was not yet assigned.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein the assigned local port is an ephemeral port.
5. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the data includes incoming and outgoing data, the incoming data being divided into data packets, each packet having associated therewith a local port and a remote port for selecting a TCP-offloaded adapter through which to be channeled travel.
6. (Currently amended) A computer program product on a computer readable medium for aggregating N Transport Control Protocol-offloaded (TCP-offloaded) TCP-offloaded adapters of a first communications system for transacting to augment network data transaction bandwidth of the first communications system by a factor of N between communications systems, N being an integer, the computer program product comprising:

code means for aggregating the N TCP-offloaded adapters by assigning a common Internet Protocol (IP) address to the N TCP-offloaded adapters;

code means for selecting one of the N aggregated TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the first and a second communications systems is to originate;

code means for originating the connection using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter, the connection for transacting data over a network between the first and the second communications systems; and

code means for transacting data ~~from the connection~~ through a computing device, the computing device to assemble data from the N TCP-offloaded adapters to the network and for channeling data associated with the connection from the network to the selected TCP-offloaded adapter using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter.

7. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein the selecting code means includes code means for using a local port and a remote port to select the TCP-offloaded, the local port and the remote port being the ports through which the data transaction is to occur.
8. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 7 wherein the selecting code means includes code means for assigning a local port through which the connection is to occur if a local port was not yet assigned.
9. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 8 wherein the assigned local port is an ephemeral port.

10. (Currently amended) The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein the data includes incoming and outgoing data, the incoming data being divided into data packets, each packet having associated therewith a local port and a remote port for selecting a TCP-offloaded adapter through which to be channeled ~~travel~~.

11. (Currently amended) An apparatus for aggregating N Transport Control Protocol-offloaded (TCP-offloaded) TCP-offloaded adapters of a first communications system for transacting to augment network data transaction bandwidth of the first communications system by a factor of N between communications systems, N being an integer, the apparatus comprising:

means for aggregating the N TCP-offloaded adapters by assigning a common Internet Protocol (IP) address to the N TCP-offloaded adapters;

means for selecting one of the N aggregated TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the first and a second communications systems is to originate;

means for originating the connection using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter, the connection for transacting data over a network between the first and the second communications systems; and

means for transacting data ~~from the connection~~ through a computing device, the computing device to assemble data from the N TCP-offloaded adapters to the network and for channeling data associated with the connection from the network to the selected TCP-offloaded adapter ~~using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter.~~

12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the selecting means includes means for using a local port and a remote port to select the TCP-offloaded, the local port and the remote port being the ports through which the data transaction is to occur.
13. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the selecting means includes means for assigning a local port through which the connection is to occur if a local port was not yet assigned.
14. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein the assigned local port is an ephemeral port.
15. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the data includes incoming and outgoing data, the incoming data being divided into data packets, each packet having associated therewith a local port and a remote port for selecting a TCP-offloaded adapter through which to be channeled travel.
16. (Currently amended) A system for aggregating N Transport Control Protocol-offloaded (TCP-offloaded) TCP-offloaded adapters for transacting to augment network data transaction bandwidth by a factor of N between communications systems, N being an integer, the system comprising:

at least one storage device for storing code data; and

at least one processor for processing the code data to aggregate the N TCP-offloaded adapters by assigning a common Internet Protocol (IP) address to the N TCP-offloaded adapters, to select one of the aggregated N TCP-offloaded adapters through which a connection between the

system and a remote communications system ~~systems~~ is to originate, to originate the connection using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter, the connection for transacting data over a network between the system and the remote communications systems, and to transact data ~~from the connection~~ through a computing device, the computing device to assemble data from the N TCP-offloaded adapters to the network and for channeling data associated with the connection from the network to the selected TCP-offloaded adapter ~~using the selected TCP-offloaded adapter~~.

17. (Original) The system of Claim 16 wherein processing the code data to select one of the TCP-offloaded adapter includes processing the code data to use a local port and a remote port to select the TCP-offloaded, the local port and the remote port being the ports through which the data transaction is to occur.
18. (Original) The system of Claim 17 wherein the code data to select one of the TCP-offloaded adapter includes processing the code data to assign a local port through which the connection is to occur if a local port was not yet assigned.
19. (Original) The system of Claim 18 wherein the assigned local port is an ephemeral port.
20. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 16 wherein the data includes incoming and outgoing data, the incoming data being divided into data packets, each packet having associated therewith a local port and a remote port for selecting a TCP-offloaded adapter through which to be channeled ~~travel~~.